(iii) more than 125 maritime Training Institutes opened in private sector in different parts of the country;

(iv) continuous up-dation of Maritime Laws to keep pacewith requirements of the International Conventions and our shipping industry;

(v) Tonnage-tax regime has been introduced with effect from 01.01.2005 which has resulted in increase in Indian tonnage;

(vi) Computerization of the Directorate and its allied offices;

(vii) Indian Database of Seafarers (INDoS) has been set up at the Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Advanced martitime Studies and Research, with a view to cater to the verification of certificates and documents possessed by seafarers;

(viii) The examination centres at Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai have been modernised to ensure that all training and certification is carried out under a quality system duly certified by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)

(ix) An additional examination centre at NOIDA near New Delhi, has been opened to accommodate the seafarers from the northern parts of the country;

(x) All important Acts, rules orders and circulars issued by DG(S) are available on its web site.

Production of **traditional items by MNCs**

2615. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that MNCs have also ventured into manufacturing things that have been traditionally undertaken by small scale industries;

(b) If so, whether Government have ascertained the extent to which the small scale industries suffer due to this competition from MNCs; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to provide competitive edge to SSI units?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) As per the notification issued by the Central Government in

December 1997, in exercise of the powers conferred under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951 industries which are not small scale industries (SSIs), including MNCs, can manufacture items reserved for exclusive manufacture by the SSI on the condition that 50 per cent of their production would be exported.

(b) No specific study has been conducted to ascertain the extent to which the small scale industries might have been affected due to competition from MNCs. However, from the fact that the annual rate of growth of production of the SSI sector has so far been consistently higher than that of the country's industrial sector as a whole, it can be inferred that the SSI sector has generally been able to face up to the competition in the market, including that from the MNCs.

(c) To enhance the competitiveness of the SSI units, the Government have put in place a slow of measures, which include assistance for technological upgradation, accessing markets, improved infrastructure, better availability of credit, facilities for training and capacity building of entrepreneurs,etc.

Closure of SSI units

2616. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of SMALL • SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of SSI units closed down during the past three years;

(b) the reasons for such closure; and

(c) the steps taken or to be taken to give filling to revival of SSI in the country?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES (SHRI MAHABIR PRASAD): (a) As per the latest information available with the Government based on the Third All India Census of the Small Scale Industries with reference to the year 2001-02, 8,87,427 registered units were found closed.

(b) Apart from voluntary closure of SSI units, the main reasons of closure are inadequacy/shortage of working capital, fall in demand, changes in technology, shortage of raw materials, marketing problems, increase in competition, management inadequacies, etc.